

How Presumptive Eligibility Can Help Families Access Child Care

Alejandra Londono Gomez | May 2023

Presumptive eligibility for child care subsidies is a policy that allows families to receive temporary child care assistance while their eligibility for the program is being determined. This means that families can get immediate financial assistance to pay for child care services, even as their application is being processed and verified. During this provisional period, families are allowed time to submit outstanding documents while getting access to much-needed care. Currently, presumptive eligibility is available in four states and one county: Delaware, Maryland, Montana, Wyoming, and Monroe County in New York.

Families Gain Significant Benefits with Presumptive Eligibility

From language barriers and long lists of documents to disproportionate access to technology, many families often have trouble with the child care assistance application process. The barriers are particularly steep for families with low incomes and Black, immigrant, and other families of color who are disproportionately affected by racism in public benefit programs. Enhancing families' access to child care while determining their qualifications for subsidies has several advantages. Presumptive eligibility policies help families and states by:

- Providing access to child care services immediately so parents or caregivers can work or attend school, knowing their children are safe and well-cared for;
- Reducing the wait time for families to receive ongoing subsidies, an assurance that supports their long-term employment security;
- Lessening the struggle with the verification process for child care subsidies, which has complex and burdensome requirements; and
- Supporting the local economy, as well as a stable and strong workforce.

Presumptive Eligibility Journey



Conclusion

It's important to note that presumptive eligibility is temporary. Families must complete the application process to receive ongoing subsidies. The duration of the presumptive eligibility period can also vary by state or jurisdiction. Since only four states and one county have a presumptive eligibility policy in place, most states have a tremendous opportunity to expedite access to care for families by implementing this policy. To learn more about presumptive eligibility [see our FAQ](#).

For more information or to receive technical assistance to support your state's efforts to work toward a presumptive eligibility policy in child care, reach out to Alejandra Londono Gomez at alondono-gomez@clasp.org.